

A
SERMON

PREACH'D at

St. Gyles's Church

In the Fields.

On *Wednesday* the 15th Day of *March* in the
Afternoon, 17th 10.

BEING

The Day Appointed by Her Majesty
for a General *Fast* and *Humiliation*.

By Tho. Knaggs *M. A. Lecturer of St. Giles's
in the Fields, and Chaplain to the Right
Honourable Fulk Lord Brooke.*

L O N D O N,

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ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH

In the Parish

On Wednesday the 22nd Day of May 1861

BEING

The Day appointed for a General Vestry Meeting

At the Parish Church of St. George in the Town of London

Present The Rev. the Rector, Mr. John Smith, and the Vestrymen, Messrs. John Doe, John Roe, and John Green.

Prov. III. vers. 5. 6.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy Paths.

IT has been a long Observation that as People and Kingdoms have grown, and advanc'd themselves by Virtue, Piety and Devotion, so they have decay'd and declin'd again by Profaneness, Debauchery, and a proud and daring Contempt of God and all Religion. *Plutarch* tells us that Religion is the Cement of all Communities, and the chief Foundation of all Legislative Power, and that 'tis as * easy to build a City in the open Air, without any ground to found it upon, as to Establish Government, constitute or conserve a Commonwealth without Religion. The † *Romans* assign'd there mighty Conquests not so much to Policy and Power, as to Piety and Religion, and

* *Facilius urbem condi sine solo posse puto, quam opinione de Diis sublata Civitatem coire aut constare. Contra Colot.*

† *Cic. Orat. de aruspice.*

Plato was much in the right when he said, that virtuous and good Men were the Pillars, Support and Preservers of the World.

And if the practice of true Religion be so great a Blessing to a Nation, by consequence it will prove, that the decay, neglect, and contempt thereof amongst a People, is a cause and forerunner of some extraordinary Calamities. * Conquests and Devastations of Countries, were generally usher'd in by a general Debauchery, Profaneness and Contempt of Religion.

As the fear of God and the observance of Divine Worship, is the best means and cause of all Greatness and Prosperity to a Kingdom, so where that is wanting it must needs be destroy'd, fall, and go to ruin.

For if it was not for the influence of Religion, and those remainders of Piety and Virtue which are yet left scatter'd amongst Mankind, the World wou'd presently be turn'd into a Wilderness, and Men into Bruits. The Text is one of *Solomons* Counsels on Exhortations.

1. A Twofold Direction how to behave our selves in all our Concerns and Affairs.

2. An Assurance of being Successful upon our so doing.

* Invenietis omnia prosperè Evenisse sequentibus Deos, adversa spernentibus. Liv. lib. 5.

Ubi non est pudor, nec cura juris, sanctitas, pietas, fides, instabile est regnum. Sen. Thyestes.

In the first direction I shall consider the Person in whom we are to Trust, the Lord.

1. You are to *Trust in the Lord*, as He is an *Almighty Being*.

His Dominion over all the World is Absolute, his Power is Infinite, and his Hand Omnipotent. He is the *Strong and Mighty Lord*, a God that can do *Wonders*, the *Almighty God*, and *able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we can ask or think*. In the Lord *Jehovah* is *everlasting Strength*. Holy David giving God Thanks for delivering him from his Enemies, says, *The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, in Him will I Trust*. Let your case be never so desperate, yet God is Almighty still, a safe refuge to fly to for succour in the Day of Trouble. Let your Sins be never so many, and your Infirmities never so great, yet He hath Power to Heal them.

Whatever you want, or whatever you stand in need of, his Power exceeds all.

But though God has full Power to deliver us out of Dangers, and our Duty to rely upon Him, who is able to do all we desire, yet He will not be *tempted*.

To cast your selves into the Fire or Water, to gallop down a Precipice, or to run upon the Mouth of a Canon, and say, you shall receive no harm, God will protect you, is not to trust in God, but in * *vanity*, and to build your confidence upon false Hopes. In

* Job 15. 31.

In this case Men do not commit themselves to the Providence of God, but cast themselves out of his Care and Protection, they do not trust God but tempt Him, and do as it were try whether He will stand by them, when they desert themselves.

When the * Devil took Christ up into the holy City, and set Him on a Pinnacle of the Temple, and said unto Him, if thou be the Son of God cast thy self down, for it is Written, He shall give his Angels charge concerning thee, and in their Hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a Stone. Jesus said unto him, it is Written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Had Christ committed his Safety to God, and cast Himself down from the Pinnacle, and presum'd upon the protection of Angels, it wou'd have been to have tempted the Almighty. He had a right notion of God, wou'd not rashly run into danger, and without using lawful Means, rely solely upon Providence for help. To trust in God aright, is so to depend upon Him, as to use our own Endeavors and lawful Means, and in them He will save, protect, and defend us.

If you cast all your care upon God, as to take none at all your selves, in vain may ye rely upon his Wisdom, Power and Goodness.

2. You are to Trust in the Lord as He is a Being infinite in Goodness.

* Matth. 4. 5, 6, 7.

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* *I shou'd utterly have fainted, but that I believe verily to see the Goodness of the Lord in the land of the living, said David.*

To encourage you to trust in God for the time to come, and acquiesce in his Tuiti^on, look back to his former Goodness, Love and Favour, and let the Experience of these Teach you your Duty in that particular.

He has been your God from time to time, from your † Mothers Womb, from your Youth, and to this Day of your Life. Upon this Experience you may trust Him at the Hour of Death, and in your last Extremity, Perplexities, and Distresses, support your selves with his wonted Goodness.

He never faileth those that trust in Him, said David. Your former Mercies, Favours and Kindnesses shou'd keep you from staggering in such or such Dangers, and being strengthened with former Experiences of his Love and Bounty, shou'd make you continue your trust under the Shadow of his Wings, even in the worst of Times.

You know not what Calamities you may fall into, whether Drought, want of Rain, or a deluge of Waters, whether Death or Famine, War or Tumults, Plague or Sicknes. Under such Extremities, Happy ye, if you have a good God to go to for Protection, and abide in Him. He who took care of you in former Times will not let

* Psal. 27. 15.

† Psal. 71. 5, 6.

these Troubles overwhelm you. Dwell still in God, and He will dwell in you. * *Quicken me, O Lord, as thou art wont,* was *David's Prayer.* His Goodness formerly has been evidenc'd in many Thousand Instances to every one of you. He has been *accustomed* to do you Good. In consideration whereof, and to confirm our Hope of His wonted loving Kindness, our *Excellent Church* in her Visitation of the Sick, has Taught us to Pray, that God wou'd *extend his accustomed Goodness* to the Person who is grieved with Sicknes.

And if you search and examine the Records of His Providence, you will find He has been your Saviour and Deliverer, and if you still confide in His Goodness, He will not forsake you in your gray Hairs, when your Strength faileth you.

† *What Men wou'd therefore Praise the Lord for his Goodness, and declare the Wonders that He doth for the Children of Men.*

When *Goliath* challeng'd *David*, *Saul* said, *Thou art not able to go against this Philistine, to fight with him, for thou art but a Youth, and he a Man of War from his Youth.* To which *David* reply'd * *The Lord that deliver'd me out of the Paw of the Lion, and out of the Paw of the Bear, He will deliver me out of the band of this Philistine.* And when *St. Paul* was in Danger of his Life,

* *Psal. 110. 156.*

† *Psal. 107. 9.*

1 *Sam. 17. 33.*

Verf. 37.

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the Experience of former Deliverances comforted him, and therefore he continued his Trust in God, * *who had deliver'd him, that He wou'd yet deliver him*, and the use he made of it was this, *to Glorify God. God is the same Yesterday, to Day, and for ever.* Consider what He has done, and from thence conclude upon your trusting in Him, what He will do.

3. You are to *Trust in the Lord* as He is your *Creator*.

You are the Work of his own Hands, He made you, and therefore will preserve you. St. Peter makes that a sure ground for Trust, † *Commit your Souls to Him in well-doing as to a Faithful Creator.* He gave you a Being out of nothing, and now when you are one of his Creatures will He not care for you? Such a Thought is Atheism, and carries infidelity of His being your Redeemer, your || *Father*, and your * *Creator* along with it. He has given you a Body, and a Soul, both are His, and whatsoever you have it is from Him. They that know God as a *Creator* will Trust in Him, Come what will, Prosperity, or Adversity, War, Famine, Pestilence, or any other Calamity, God as your *Creator* will be a Sanctuary to you, a Rock, and a sure Defence about you.

If therefore you wou'd have no Evil come nigh your Dwellings, *acquaint your selves with God as*

* 2 Cor. 1: 10:

|| Isai. 40: 28:

† 1 Pet. 4: 19:

* Isai. 63: 16:

He is your *Creator*. Is He not your Father? And are not you His Children? Has He put a natural Affection into the brut Beasts towards their Young, and shall He not much more be concern'd for you who are His Workmanship, and whose Hands have made and fashioned you? If He takes care of the Creatures below you, much more will He preserve you who is above them? If God takes care for Oxen those inferior Creatures, much more will you who is the Master-piece of the Creation, the highest of Creatures, be under the same Watch?

God hath a value for all things that He hath made, but He regards the Life of a Man more than that of a Beast, and therefore Christ says, * *Fear ye not, for ye are of more Value than many Sparrows*. Providence is concern'd in both, but He makes a difference as to their Worth and Dignity. You may safely Trust Him, and give up your selves to Him, who made you, who gave you Life, and Breath, and every thing. St. Paul when he wou'd declare that God to the Athenians whom they ignorantly Worship'd, he said, † *He is not far from every one of us: For in Him we Live, Move, and have our Being*. And this is sufficient for your Trust in God, that He is your *Creator*, that you receiv'd your Life from Him, and what you have you have of Him. And so

4. You are to Trust in the Lord, since all that you Enjoy is of Him, in Him, and from Him.

* Matth. 10. 31.

† Acts 17. 28.

* Every

* *Every good and perfect Gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights. If you prosper in your Callings it is by Gods Blessing.*

If you succeed in this, or that Affair, the success is from God. If you have gotten much Wealth 'tis not by your own Power, and the might of your Hand, but 'tis the *Blessing of the Lord alone that maketh Rich.*

† *The Lord was with Joseph, and that which he did the Lord made it to prosper.* You may rise early, and sit up late, and Eat the Bread of Carefulness, and all to no purpose, unless God gives a Blessing on your Labours. Lands, Houses, Children, and all other Enjoyments are bestow'd by Gods Bounty on whom, and when He pleaseth. Whoever has them must own them to be a Gift that cometh of the Lord. You must Bless God for giving them, and Trust in Him for there safety and preservation. You must look up to Heaven, and fix your Eyes upon God, and say, || *Lord my Hope is in Thee.*

He is the beginning of all your Mercies, and therefore your Trust ought to center in Him. It is God that gives, and therefore you ought constantly to place your Confidence in Him, and that will carry you through your greatest Wants and Difficulties.

5. You are to *Trust in the Lord with all your Hearts*

* Jam. 1. 17.

|| Psal. 39. 8.

† Gen. 39. 23.

Trusting in the Lord with all the Heart, imports these particulars.

1. To obey His Word, and make that the Rule and Guide of your Actions.

2. To submit to His Will, to Live according to it, to endure the greatest hardships rather than depart from it, to desire to do it fervently, and to Pray that we may be enabled to accomplish it as constantly as the Angels in Heaven do.

3. To follow our particular Callings and Affairs, not to meddle with such things which we are not immediately concern'd in, and which we do not understand, but to leave them to Gods disposal, and those whom He has set over us.

4. To Trust in the Lord with all thine Heart, is to rely upon His Wisdom and Goodness for the supports and supplies of this Life, to trust our Persons, our Cares, and Concernments with Him, * *Leave thy Fatherless Children, I will preserve them Alive, and let thy Widows trust in me, saith the Lord.* † *Cast all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.* And whom can ye better trust than God? For if He be for you, who can be against you?

5. To Trust in the Lord with all thine Heart, is to acknowledge and declare your dependance upon Him in earnest and frequent Prayer, to || *pour out your Hearts before Him*, for trust and Prayer must be join'd together if you expect to receive any

* Jer. 49. 11.
Psal. 62. 8.

† 1 Pet. 5. 7.

Blessing. God has promised to give, but not without your *asking* and *praying*.

6. To *trust in the Lord with all thine heart*, no other thing besides God must share in it. And

1. You must not *lean to your own Understanding*. I shall give you some Instances wherein *leaning to ones Understanding* does shew it self.

1. It appears in Matters of *Religion*. Nothing more usual than for illiterate and ordinary Persons to take upon them to expound and interpret the most difficult and obscure Texts of Scripture, to pretend to understand the most mysterious and dark Points of Divinity, and with a great deal of Confidence set up to reform a *Bishop*, rule a *Church*, and teach their *Teachers*. These zealous conceited *Mechanicks* are so full of themselves and so soppish, that they over-look the plain and easy Places of Scripture, and busy themselves in deep Disputations, nice Controversies, and the mystical Book of Revelations.

Of all impertinent and troublesome Creatures, they are the most ridiculous who think they know and understand the whole Bible, when they know or understand nothing as they ought.

2. Another Instance of some Persons *leaning to their own Understanding* appears in Matters of *State and Government*.

We are fallen into such unhappy times, that every body, tho' never so much out of their way, and beyond their Capacity, sets up for a *Statermender*, and spend a great part of their time in tampering with State Matters, in discoursing about the

the Affairs of Government, the Actions of their Superiors, and finding fault with there Conduct and Management. Every one wou'd tell a *Queen* what she must do, govern a *Kingdom*, advise a *Judge*, instruct a *General*, and Act an *Admiral*. How bravely wou'd things go on were they but at the Helm and in Power and Authority? When alas! They understand nothing of the matter, are out of the bounds of their Calling and Knowledge, and speak great swelling Words of those things which they know not.

'Tis the *Pilot's* business to *Steer* the Ship. Every unskilful Seaman is not to take upon him the Place of *Steersman*, nor every common Soldier to leave his Station, and direct his *Captain*. Publick Affairs belong to publick Persons. And even those little Persons who are most discontented among us, cou'd not enjoy what they have, did not the Wings of this happy Government in *Church* and *State* hover over them.

When *David* gave order for removing the *Ark of God*, the *Oxen* that carryed it having stumbled, *Uzza* who was one of the Drivers, put forth his Hand to hold it up, for which * the Anger of the Lord was so kindled against him, that He smote him, and he dy'd upon the spot. A Document to us all, that we let God, and our Lawful Superiors Govern the World, and regulate the Affairs of Religion and Government.

* 1 Chron. 13. 3, 9, 10.

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It is not for every private Person, who is of a busy and pragmatistical Temper, to invade the Office of a *Committee of Council*, to act a Counsellor of State, and determine what is to be done in the *Church and State*, and what not. Our Nation is very much pester'd with such self-conceited Persons, whose Education has hardly been beyond the *Anvil*, and yet are still tinkering the *Church and State*, and *Exercise themselves in great Matters, that are too high for them.*

This is not the way to mend the matter or make things better, but rather to run us into Confusion, and introduce Distractions and Disorders.

3. Another instance of *leaning to their own understanding* appears in quarrelling with Gods Providence. God can do nothing to please some People. Because they were not Born to be Great and Powerful, Masters and Rulers, to great Honours and high Preferments, have therefore no Content and Satisfaction of Mind, always whining, complaining, and murmuring against God for His unequal Distributions, and pretend to be wiser than Him.

Hence they take upon them to Arraign His Wisdom, Accuse His Goodness, Question His Justice, sawcily Clamour against His Proceedings, imagining they cou'd mend Gods Work, and do better in the Government of Mankind than He does.

Thus being Wise in their own Eyes, they *lean to their own understanding*, and with a great deal of Arrogance, and Self-conceit, offer to Teach God, and direct infinite Wisdom.

4. Ano-

4. Another Instance of *Learning to their own Understanding* appears by condemning all such to be in the Wrong, who do not just think, and are of the same Opinion with them.

Now this is the height of Folly, Pride and Ignorance, to think to make your Judgment the Standard of other Mens, that you have ingross'd all the knowledge of the World to your selves; that no others can be in the Right but you, that you know more than all the rest of Mankind, that you cannot be deceiv'd, or mistaken, as others are, that you are infallible and unerring in your Words and Actions, and as *Joseph Dreamt*, that all Mens *Sheaves bow'd bow to your* * *Sheaves* and *abode*

Now there is nothing wherein Men Condemn others, and more cry up themselves than in Opinions and Practices of Religion.

How Angry are some Men, because they cannot believe as fast as they, and because they themselves are satisfy'd such a Doctrine is True, expect another Man shou'd be satisfy'd likewise. But Men will differ about matters of Religion, as to Truth or Error, as long as they have different Souls, different Educations, different Understandings, and different Interests. 'Tis never to be done, to bring all Men to one Religion, or to one Opinion.

There will be Disputes and Controversies to the end of the World, in order to Salvation or Condemnation. But as to those things which are indifferent, which may be done or omitted, in such Cases, Modesty

and Humility, Moderation, Peace and Charity, ought to take place where they cannot agree. If some Men would not set too high a Value upon their own Judgments in things *indifferent*, there would not be such Quarrels and Contentions, such Divisions and Debates as there are now among us to the sacrificing the *Substantials* of Christianity to a trifle.

2. The other part of the Direction in the Text is, *In all thy ways to acknowledge the Lord.*

By way in Scripture Language is understood the Course of a Mans Life, the manner, method, and order of his Conversation, and in the Text comprehends thus much, to hold your selves to God, that your Conversation be conformable to his Will and Direction, and whatever your Dangers and Distresses be, to keep to your Duty, to take no evil Courses, but to put your selves, your Persons, and Concerns, in the use of lawful means, under God's Protection.

Whatever your Station be wherein God has placed you, to hold your selves in it, not to go beyond the Bounds of your Calling, and in cases of doubt and danger commit your ways unto the Lord, to leave the event to Him, and be directed by Him and your Superiors which He has set over you.

This is the best way to secure your Safety in dubious and dangerous times, that you would trust in the Lord with all your hearts, lean not to your own Understanding, and in all your ways to acknowledge Him. I do not mean you shou'd sit still and suffer
C your

your holy *Religion*, your *Liberties* and *Properties* to be taken from you. No, in cases where a common ruin is threatned, or our Government to be unhinged or overturn'd, then you are to hinder and prevent those Dangers, but so, that it be in the use of lawful means, and no otherwise.

I own every *Protestant*, tho' he be a private Person, ought to be concern'd for his *Religion* and his *Country*, but if he is so far transported with *Zeal*, so as to go beyond his Duty and betake himself to irregular Courses, is in plain terms to ask help of the Devil to fight the Lord's Battles, and to destroy Religion for its Preservation.

What an unwarrantable *Zeal* is that for Men to commit Wickedness to make themselves righteous, to commit Murder in the Fear of God, to think to obtain Heaven by travelling in the direct Road which leads to Hell, and to kill a Man to preserve his Life? When, and where, did ever Christ and his Apostles teach that Men must do evil that they may promote that which is good, that they must break God's Laws to advance God's Glory, that they must pursue the ways of Damnation to save their own Souls, or that Errors are to be publish'd for the Propagation of the Faith? Whoever does such things, forceth Religion to commit a Rape upon it self, to contradict it self, and makes the Church even unchurch it self.

You are not to murder Men, tho' thereby it might be of the greatest Service to God and Religion. And tho' the Church of Rome teacheth the contrary Doctrine, we, who have learned Christ, hold

hold that Principle to be unchristian, devilish, bloody and barbarous.

Such a blind, furious and intemperate *Zeal* may make you *Papists*, but will never render you good Christians, or true Members of the Church of *England*. 'Tis a *Zeal without Knowledge*, a Principle never avowed in the Word of God, and a Doctrine diametrically opposite to Christianity.

We have some among us, who make a great Noise with the *Church*, and set up to be *Bigots* for its defence, and yet seldom or never come to its Service or regard its Ordinances. So they have but the *Church* in their Mouths, and with the disobedient Jews cry out, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*, they matter not how they live, or what Scandal they give to the Christian Religion by a profligate Life and Conversation.

The *Hypocrisy* of such Men is no longer to be dissembled. For when we see Men talk mightily of the *Church*, and yet seldom or never frequent it, it is not uncharitable to say, that it is not any true love for the Church, but some other bye End or Interest that acts and moves such a Person.

To be concern'd for, fill their Mouths with the *Church* and shew a great deal of *Zeal* for it, and yet seldom attend Gods solemn Worship there, or when they do come to behave themselves most irreverently and indecently at the publick Prayers, is the most evident Sign that can be given of a *false Brother*, a false *Church-Man*.

Thus having dispatch'd the twofold Direction in the Text. I come

To the other part, the Assurance of being Successful, if you follow the Direction, which is, *God shall direct your Paths.*

Be your Enemies never so Devillish or Malicious, never so Envious or Blood Thirsty, and their Plots never so Secret and Hellish, yet if you commit your selves to God in well-doing, He will take care of you and deliver you out of their Hands. His Laws Condemn their Practices, their ungodly Projects, and intended Mischiefs. He cannot be impos'd upon, for there is no Wisdom, nor Understanding, nor Counsel against the Lord. He disappointeth the devices of the Crafty, so that their Hands cannot perform their Enterprize.

If you do your Duty as the Laws of God direct, you need not fear, though Thousands set themselves against you round about, you may lie down in Peace, and take your rest, because God makes you to dwell in safety. The Sword cannot defend such, as draw it in an evil Cause. Achitophel himself cannot give good advice for the carrying on an Unlawful Project, but shall either mistake, or be mistaken. * God breaks the Power of the Ungodly and Malicious. He can discover all their Designs and Attempts, make there folly appear where they thought themselves to be Wise, and Baffle and turn all their Crafts, Steps, Shifts, and Windings into Infatuations.

Jeab thought he had done a great Work, and made *David* his Friend, that he had strengthened

his Interest in the Army, and got the Love of the People when he had Slain * Abner King Saul's General. But see what was the end of his Treachery and Barbarity. It was David's charge a little before his Death to his Son Solomon, that he † should not let Joab's bloody Head go down to the Grave in Peace. And as David commanded, so Solomon obey'd and fulfill'd his Word, for he order'd Benaias to fall upon him and Slay him at the vialy Horns of the Altar whether he fled for Sanctuary. The * Lord having return'd Abner's Innocent Blood upon Joab's own Head.

Trust in God, depend upon Him, Pray unto Him, and use lawful Means for your own safety, and take no course but what he directs, and leave the Event to Him † they that put their Trust in the Lord shall be even as the Mount Sion which may not be removed, but standeth fast for ever. Your help will come from Him, for He shall preserve you from all Evil, keep your Souls, and preserve your going out and coming in. Upon such a Resignation of your selves to Gods disposal, you Honour His Majesty, and cause Him to double His Providence, and take special notice of you.

Your chiefest safety is in Gods Protection. Whether you Sleep or Wake, whether you be among Friends or Enemies, in Peace or War, or whether you be in danger of your Lives or no,

* 2 Sam. 3. 27.

† Ver. 29.

† Psal. 125. 1.

† 1 Kings 2. 6.

* Ver. 22.

do but order your selves according to His Will, and fall not off to indirect Courses, God will provide for your Security, and His Providence will watch over you and keep you. *Saul* in time of distress fell to unlawful Means, he goes to a * *Witch* to receive her directions, and ask Counsel what he shou'd do against the *Philistines* who made War against him. But do not you forsake God and fly to the Devil for safety. Do not hope for Peace by engaging in War against Divine Providence. And run not into Danger for a Deliverance. If well-doing will not protect you, I am sure, doing that which is ill never will. Step not out of Gods way, and always believe He can save you, without calling in any Unrighteous and Indirect means to assist you. The best and only means of securing your selves against all the workers of Iniquity, be of what Profession or Denomination they will, is, not to do like them, or joyn with them in bad Courses.

They of the Church of *Rome* call us *Hereticks*, and think they do God good Service when they bring *Protestants* to a Stake and Burn them or blow them up into the Air. However be not ye like unto them, or be tempted to be of such an Unchristian Spirit as they are of. Christianity allows of no such Wicked Practices, and justifies no such *Papish* Principles. This way of taking unlawful Courses to promote and advance Religion may make you *Papists*, but 'tis contrary to the Principles of the Church of *England*. And if you comply with them in their Sins, and use the same Sinful means to preserve you, that they have done to destroy you, you will be like them, and have as little of the Gospel Temper in you as they have.

Many have been the Designs of Treachery and Mischief, against our Church and State, since the Re-

* 1 Sam. 28, 7.

formation by our *Popish Adversaries*. Plots have been deeply and cunningly laid, bloody Preparations made to ruine and destroy them, and cruel Malice been vented upon *Protestants* in Massacres and Slaughters, for carrying on the *Catholick Cause*. But God in his infinite Mercy has wrought for us great and signal Deliverances, and I hope will deliver us upon our Amendment and Repentance, and committing our selves unto Him.

Look up to Heaven, and remember, you have a God there who exalts all such as are humble and penitent. He ** knows the way of the righteous*, approves of their doings, and upon that account defends and protects them. St. Peter makes this observation upon just upright *Noah's* and righteous *Lot's* deliverances, the one from the Flood, the other out of Sodom, *† The Lord knows how to deliver the Godly*.

What other Kingdom, or what other Nation under Heaven hath so much cause to bless God for so many Deliverances as we have? Other Countries round about us are, and have been for a long time in a confusion, and we safe without Fire or Faggot, Rapine or Plunder, Sword and Bloodshed.

Alas! Some Men little consider whose Interest they serve and promote by our unhappy Dissentions. Our Feuds and Animosities highly gratify the *Common Enemy and Oppressor*, whose great Design and Policy it has all along been by our Divisions to pull down the *Church of England*, that so we may become a Prey to *Rome*.

God has bless'd us with a *Virtuous and Religious Queen*, with a course of successes, and deliver'd us from *Popery and Slavery*, and shall we after so many glorious Victories, so many signal Mercies, so many miracu-

* Psal. i. 6.

† 2 Pet. 2. 9.

ious Blessings, and after so long bloody, and expensive a War be *seditionously Preach'd, Hallow'd, and Mob'd* out of our Religion, our Civil Rights and Liberties by *Papists, Nonjurors, and other Enemies to Her Majesties Title and Government, Crown and Dignity?* Our Enemies have nothing else to hope for, but our *Dissensions and Divisions*, and if ever we fall a Prey into their Hands, and our Church totter, 'twill be by being divided among our selves.

If we bite and devour one another at home, it is not to be expected, without the greatest Vanity, that God shou'd preserve us, or fight our Battles abroad for us?

The * Historian speaking of the downfall of *Britain* tells us, that it began by Civil Wars among themselves, ending in high Discontents, Revenges, Outrages, Hatred and Prejudice. To conclude. The sincere Profession and Practice of True Religion, and being at Peace among our selves, is the chief and best means, not only to procure, but also to secure Prosperity and Felicity to our Church and State. But if we will go on still in our Sins, Live in a general Contempt and Neglect of Religion, be unthankful for Mercies and Deliverances, Successes and Victories, and be Tumultuous, Disorderly, Seditious, Factionous and Unquiet, what remains, but to expect heavy Judgments, and to wear this impress, *our Destruction is from our selves*. From which infamous Imputation good Lord deliver us. *Amen.*

* Gild. de Excid. Brit.